

AMERICA FOR AMERICANS.

The Argonaut thus blows its blast for America:

The one dominating issue of the next campaign, as tokens are disclosed, will be that concerning immigration and naturalization. California was first to teach the lesson to the older States, in the matter of the Chinese, that there is a race which should be excluded and that was unfitted for citizenship. From the throes of civil war the negroes have emerged to the quality of citizens. It was contended, therefore, that the Mongolians should be admitted and invested with the sacred franchise, and this contention was made by eminent statesmen and leaders in public life, and by the press, without distinction of party, in Congress, and in every State except California. But at length the appeal of California prevailed. Congress legislated to exclude the Mongolian from citizenship, and since then has excluded the race from immigration. It is not the appeal or protestation of California alone which now pervades. Long-suffering and painful experience have constrained the American people to undo, or more distinctively regulate, the conditions of that act of the venerated fathers of the republic by which the gates of every port were opened to the incoming of the emigrants from every quarter of the globe. It is clear, in the light of the debates in the convention which framed the constitution, that there was no contemplation of the condition of things which has come and is upon us. The thirteen States were sparsely populated, and wholesome immigration was desired. The naturalization laws made by the early Congress, at successive sessions, are convincing that the foundation, thought, and dominating care were that none of the objectionable classes, from which the country now suffers, would ever come to outnumber the land. Few ships crossed the Atlantic from Europe; none were ever dreamed of from Asia. Passage was expensive; paupers could not come; criminals were confined at home; and of revolutionists and insurrectionaries of the European types of this period, none had existence. The immigration was mainly from Great Britain and Ireland, of English-speaking people, and from the Huguenot families of France. Later came the exiled and fugitive Poles, the Germans, and the Scandinavians. Not until the last twenty-five years have the objectionable and disturbing races and classes poured upon the country—Italians and others from the Mediterranean coast, Portuguese, German communists, Polish insurrectionaries, Russian nihilists, Austrian outcasts, vagabonds, paupers, and criminals deported from every nation of the Old World. They do not come for love of liberty, but for fear of death in their native land and the hope of life in this. They were bad at home and become worse here. Eager and vile politicians lead them to complainant courts, and the mockery of naturalization is performed. They are admitted to citizenship, and are voted in gangs as hogs are sold in the Chicago stock-yards. Their votes count equally with those of intelligent and conscientious citizens. The naturalization law of Congress is the authorization. But besides this general law is the authority of each State to declare the franchise of citizenship and admit to the voting privilege persons who can not be citizens of the United States, and are not. The constitution ordains that the Congress shall have the power to establish a uniform rule of naturalization. It also ordains that the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States. One of alien birth, to be admitted a citizen of the United States, must have declared his intention to that effect and made residence in the country for five consecutive years. But in some of the States, the person of alien birth who has declared his intention of citizenship and had residence of six months or of a year is admitted to naturalization and invested with the voting franchise. In the older States, one of alien birth must be a citizen of the United States—of five years' residence—to be a voter; but in the newer States, one is permitted to vote merely upon six months' residence, with the declaration of intention to become a citizen. Certainly these citizens of the particular State are not to be reckoned as citizens of the United States.

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